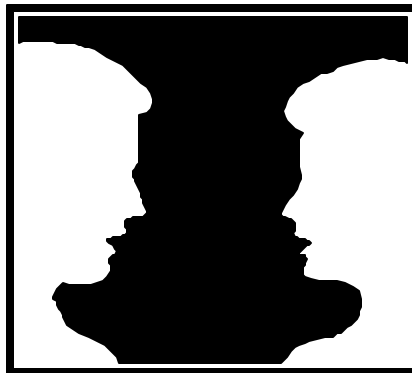


Module 8:

The Interview Process



Agenda

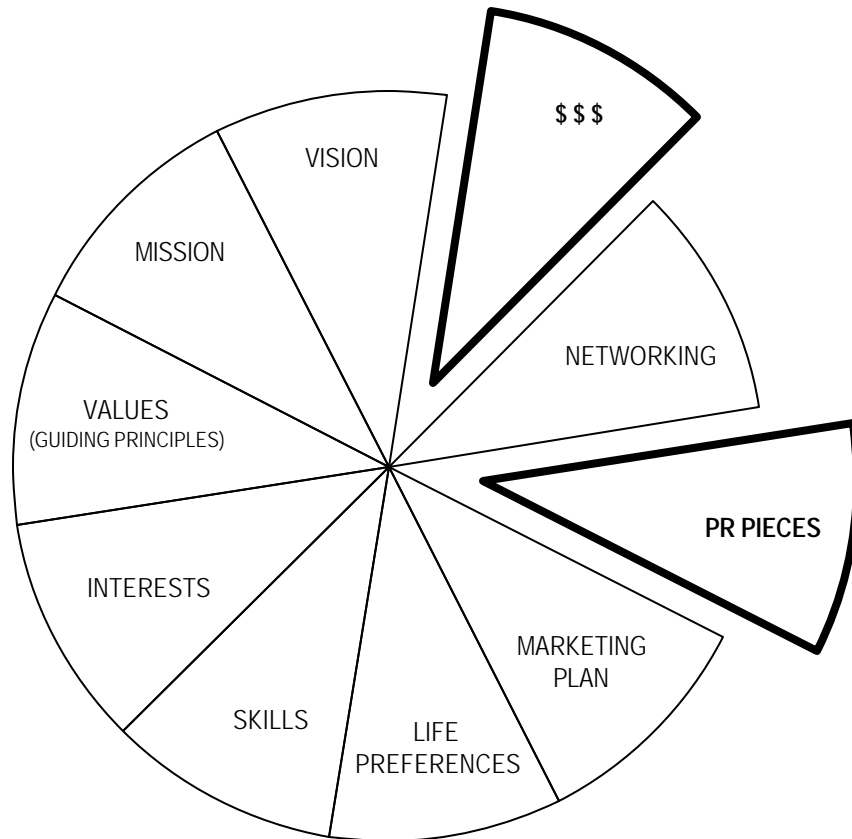
- Introduction
- Personal Presentation
- Interviewing
- **Ex:** Answering Common Interview Questions
- **Ex:** Interviewing Role-play
- Thank-you Letters
- Interview Follow-ups
- Evaluating Job Offers
- Negotiating
- Job Acceptance Letter
- Summary
- Learning Review
- Evaluation

Objectives

At the end of this module, you'll be able to:

- Make an effective personal presentation.
- Interview effectively.
- Write a thank-you letter.
- Follow up on interviews.
- Negotiate the terms of a job offer.
- Write a job acceptance letter.

Career Plan



Perhaps the most important piece of your public relations is the presentation portion. How you look, how well you present yourself and what you have to say can be the deciding factor for the employer, making your Career Plan a successful venture. It is very important to know your product (you) and present it well (the interview). This module is also part of your financial plan, as you look at salary and benefits negotiation.

Dressing for Success

- First impressions are not only based on what you say, but also to a large extent on your appearance.
- There are different dress codes for different industries (e.g., in many office jobs men are required to wear suits, while in construction jobs men wear jeans and casual shirts).
- Often there are also differences in dress codes within the same industry (e.g., teachers at some schools have to dress more formally than teachers at other schools).
- Know the dress code for where you are going and dress appropriately. Note, if an organization has a formal dress code for most of the week, and you are meeting with someone on casual day, you should still dress formally to create the best first impression.

WOMEN IN PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS (I.E., MANAGEMENT, COUNSELOR, TEACHER, ETC.)

- Skirt suit or separates (e.g., blazer and skirt)
- White or light colored blouse
- Coordinating or nude hose
- Hem length at, or below, the knee
- Simple shoe with moderate heel
- Minimal jewelry
- No perfume/discrete make-up

WOMEN IN OTHER POSITIONS (I.E., CLERICAL, WAITRESS, CONSTRUCTION, ETC.)

- Pant-suit, separates, dress
- Conservative, professional colors and patterns
- Coordinating hose or stockings
- Low heel or flat shoe
- Minimal jewelry
- No perfume/discrete make-up

Dressing for Success

MEN IN PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS (I.E., MANAGEMENT, COUNSELOR, TEACHER, ETC.)

- Dark single-breasted suit (e.g., navy or gray)
- White shirt
- Coordinating tie
- Black leather shoes

MEN IN OTHER POSITIONS (I.E., CLERICAL, WAITRESS, CONSTRUCTION, ETC.)

- Dark pants
- White or light colored shirts
- Tie
- Sportscoat
- Black leather shoes

Interview Preparation

Preparation is a critical aspect of interviewing effectively.

- Do _____ to gain knowledge about the organization.
- Practice _____ to possible questions.
- Prepare _____ that you will ask.
- Know the interviewer's _____.
- Know the _____, travel time, and where to park.
- Get a good night's _____ before the interview.
- _____ appropriately.
- Bring your _____, references, and work samples (if necessary). All items should be in a folder.
- Arrive _____ minutes ahead of schedule.

Purpose of Interviews

<i>Screening Interviews</i>	<i>Selecting Interviews</i>
<i>Characteristics:</i>	<i>Characteristics:</i>
Determine if applicant has the basic knowledge and _____ to do the job. _____ the pool of applicants. Usually lasts no more than _____ minutes. Often conducted by a human resource _____. Can be conducted by _____ or in person.	Use to make _____ decisions. Can last _____ hour or more. Involve in-depth decisions of how applicant's _____ fits with the job opening. Require applicant to _____ a variety of questions. Allow applicant to _____ questions.

Stages of Interviews

1. Introductory

Interviewer forms an initial _____ of the applicant. Decisions to hire begin here.

2. Employer Questions

Interviewer tries to determine if there is a match between the applicant's knowledge and _____ and the job requirements.

Interviewer tries to determine how well the applicant's attitude and values fit with the organization's work culture and image.

3. Applicant Questions

Interviewer tries to determine applicant's level of _____ in the job and the organization.

Applicant has opportunity to find out additional _____ about the job and the organization.

4. Closing

Applicant _____ his/her strong interest in the position.

Applicant finds out when the _____ decision will be made.

Effective Verbal and Nonverbal Skills

- Greet the interviewer with a firm hand shake and a smile.
- Make eye contact.
- Sit up straight and lean slightly forward.
- Use natural gestures.
- Think before you speak.
- Ask interviewer to clarify questions, if needed.
- Speak clearly.
- Show enthusiasm in your voice.
- Use proper grammar.
- Listen carefully.
- Thank them for their time.
- Ask for their business card.

Common Interview Questions Worksheet

Directions:

Think about a position for which you'd like to interview. Write down what your responses might be to the following questions.

1. Tell me about yourself.

2. Why are you leaving your current position?

3. What do you consider your most significant accomplishment?

4. Why do you believe you are qualified for the position?

5. What do you consider your most significant strengths?

6. What do you consider your most significant weakness?

Guidelines to Answer Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.

Provide information about yourself that relates to why you will be successful in the job. Only discuss your positive characteristics.

2. Why are you leaving your current position?

Do not speak negatively about a current or previous employer. One possible answer to this question is that you wanted an opportunity to expand your background/knowledge.

3. What do you consider your most significant accomplishment?

This is a critical question that can get you the job. Describe, in detail, an accomplishment that was truly worth achieving. Discuss the obstacles you had to overcome, and use data to illustrate your points.

4. Why do you believe you are qualified for the position?

Discuss three skills you have that will make you successful in the job.

5. What do you consider your most significant strengths?

Discuss three strengths, and provide an example of each. Choose your strengths that are most compatible with the job.

6. What do you consider your most significant weakness?

Mention a weakness you have had in the past, and then discuss steps you have taken to improve it. This type of answer indicates that you value bettering yourself.

The Interview

Questions from the Prospective Employer

Please Note: When constructing your response consider your transferable skills as they apply to the position for which you are being interviewed.

1. What is a typical day like? What kinds of activities take up the most time on your job?
2. Why should I hire you?
3. Tell me something about yourself (Answer only as it supports your candidacy for the job vacancy)? Your hobbies and interests?
4. What is your boss's title and what are your boss's functions?
5. In your current position, what do you consider the single most important idea that you contributed?. ...your single most noteworthy accomplishments?
6. What major problem have you encountered and how did you deal with it?
7. What do you think it takes for a person to be successful in a particular job or specialty?
8. What characteristics do you think it takes for a person to be successful in a particular job or specialty?
9. What risks did you take in your last few jobs, and what were the results of those risks?
10. Think about something that you consider a failure in your life, and tell me why you think it occurred?
11. Can you tell me a little bit about how you go about making important decisions?
12. What do you do when you have trouble solving a problem?
13. What did you do in the last job to make yourself more effective?
14. Where do you see yourself three years down the road, five years, ten years?
15. What is the most monotonous job you have ever had?
16. Describe the best boss you ever had?
17. Tell me about the people you hired in the last job? How long did they stay with you, and how did they work out?
18. What specific strengths did you bring to your last job that made you effective?
19. What specific strengths do you think that you can bring to this position?
20. What do you know about our company?
21. Why did you leave (or are leaving) your last job?
22. What qualifications do you think that you have that will make you successful in this job?
23. What would you like to be earning two years from now?
24. What kind of references do you think your previous employers would give you?

25. Why did you decide (not decide) to go to college?
26. Tell me a little bit about how well you did in school?
27. What were your best and worst subjects?
28. What sort of jobs did you have while you were at school?
29. Tell me a little bit about your extra-curricular activities?
30. What did you do the day before yesterday -- in detail?
31. What are the most difficult aspects of your current job, and how do you approach them?
32. What differentiates you from other applicants?
33. Are you willing to travel?..... to relocate?
34. What criteria are you using to evaluate the job?
35. How would you describe the ideal job for you?
36. How do you work under pressure?
37. In what kind of environment are you most comfortable?
38. If you were hiring someone for this position, what qualifications would you look for?
39. How do you determine or evaluate success?
40. Could you tell me why you are interested in this job?
41. How has your experience prepared you for this position?
42. What motivates you to put forth your best effort?
43. How do you think a friend that knows you well would describe you?
44. How do you describe yourself?
45. What do you consider your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
46. What is more important to you, money or the type of job?
47. What are the most important rewards that you expect in your career?
48. What do you really want to do in life?
49. What personal goals have you established for yourself? Professionally?
50. How are you preparing yourself to achieve them?

Illegal Questions

What is your date of birth?

What is your marital status?

What does your spouse do?

Do you have any children?

How is your health?

Have you ever received workers' compensation?

Have you ever been convicted of a crime?

Three ways to handle them:

-

-

-

Purpose of Asking Questions During an Interview

1. Enables the interviewer to _____ about your thinking skills.
2. Indicates that you have a strong level of _____ in the position and the organization.
3. Enables you to determine if there is a _____ between your needs and goals and the job.
4. Enables you to determine if there is a _____ between your values and attitudes and the organization's culture.

Possible Questions to Ask the Interviewer

- What are the specific responsibilities of the job?
- Where does the job fit into the organization?
- To whom would I report?
- How would you describe the work environment?
- Do your employees work individually or as a team?
- How would I be trained or introduced to the job?
- What career opportunities exist in the company?
- What are the department's goals for the year?

***Note:** Don't ask about salary or benefits.*

Interview Role Play Worksheet

Directions:

Select a position for which you will interview based on your goals. Then answer each question.

1. What do you consider your most significant accomplishment?

2. Why do you believe you are qualified for the position?

3. What do you consider your most significant strength?

4. What do you consider your most significant weakness?

5. What is your date of birth?

Interview Roleplay

Observer Checklist

Please check (✓) the box for the behaviors demonstrated by the interviewee.

Did the interviewee:

Yes!

1. Make eye contact with the interviewer(s)
2. Speak clearly
3. Answer the questions asked and relate to the job
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the field or industry
5. Ask questions of the interviewer
6. Thank the interviewer and express interest in the job
7. Ask for a business card
8. “Sell” his/her skills

☐
☐
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☐

What was the best thing the interviewee did?

Sample Thank You Letter

Amy Ellway
11750 Foothills Dr. #113
Ft. Collins, CO 80526

October 15, 20XX

Marc Johnson
Operations Manager
Gentract Corporation
PO Box 964
Casper, WY 82602

Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for the interview this afternoon for the position of Secretary. I appreciated the time and consideration you gave me.

The Secretary position we discussed definitely sounds interesting to me. I feel that I could make a valuable contribution to Gentract by organizing the files and leading the Administrative Project.

If you need additional information, please contact me at (303) 258-3387. I look forward to hearing from you next Thursday.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Amy Ellway

Sample Thank You Letter

11223 South Shore Road
Reston, VA 22090
(703) 437-3748

March 30, 20XX

Ms. Mary Smith
Personnel Director
DelRay, Inc.
123 Marina St., Suite 200
Laguna Hills, CA 92037

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview yesterday. The information you shared with me about DelRay, Inc. was most interesting, and I am excited about the possibility of applying my education and experience in the position of Vice President of Marketing. The expansion and Public Awareness Campaign are especially intriguing, and I look forward to helping DelRay enter the new market.

If I can provide you with any additional information, please contact me at (703) 437-3748. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Renee Summer

The Interview Model

Pre-interview

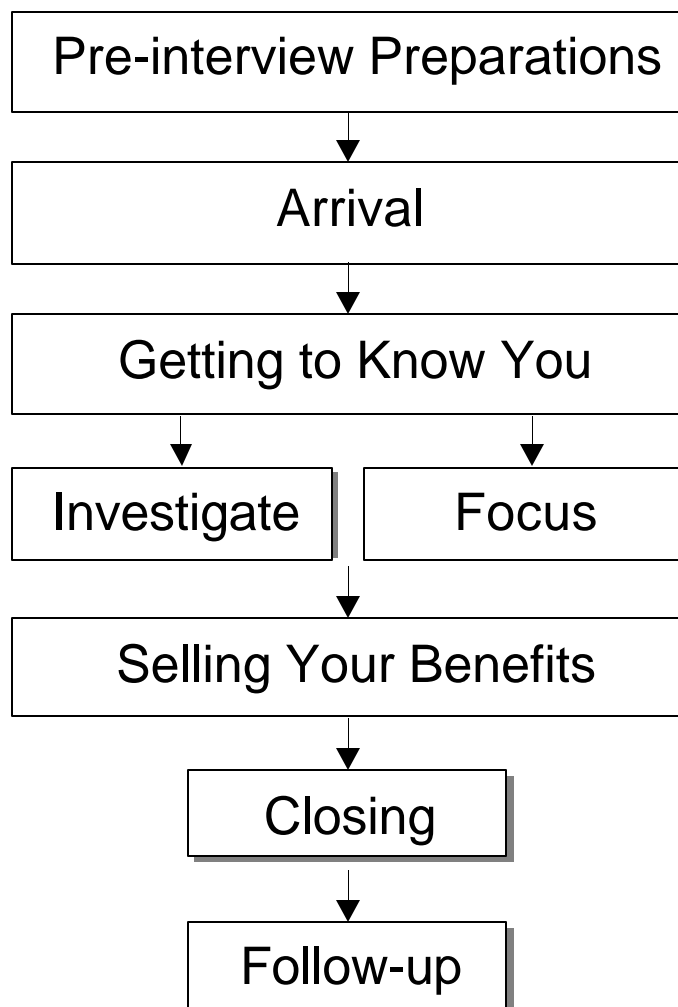
- Image: clothes, verbally and in writing.
- Research the marketplace- industry, company and salary information.
- Review company literature and benefits package.
- Pre-trip to office.
- Portfolio and extra resumes.
- Master application
- Prepare two-minute introduction.
- Prepare questions to ask and practice answers, typical interview questions.

Arrival

- Arrive on time.
- Observe place, people and culture.
- Be prepared to fill in employment form.
- Build relationship with support staff.

Getting to know you

- Direct contact with firm handshake.
- Observe employer's office and interactive patterns.
- Adapt to employer's pace.
- Be alert to transition to next stage of interview.



Investigate and focus

- Ideally a 50-50 exchange.
- Use questions you've prepared to regulate flow of conversation — and get information about company, employer, job, and 'hot' issues.
- Observe employer as you talk to make sure that you are connecting.
- If you are unsure on how to answer a question, ask for more information.
- Answer questions with the style of the employer in mind.
- Don't talk too much...gauge answers to intent of question.
- Carefully time opportunity to move into next stage.

Sell your benefits

- This is the most difficult part of the interview, because you have to choose your experiences that match the needs of this company, this job and this person and prove that you can benefit them.
- Be conscious of the time limits set on the interview—if the interview is running overtime, check with the employer to see if the interview should end.
- A job offer and salary negotiations would come at the end of this section—salary negotiations may be a whole meeting.

Closing

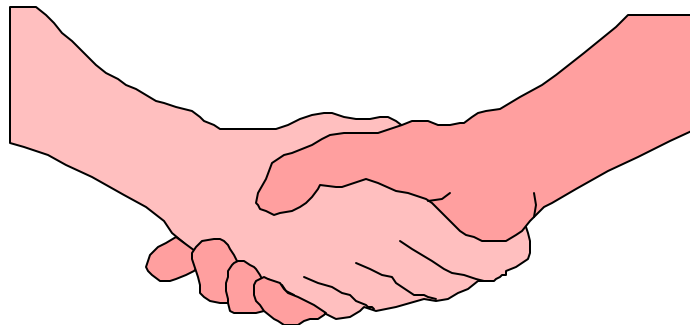
- End as strongly as you started.
- If you want the job, tell the employer.
- Ask about the hiring process—Get clarity about when you can expect to hear from them.
- Ask permission to follow-up with employer on status of hiring process.
- Ask for a business card.
- Thank the employer.

Post-interview (follow-up)

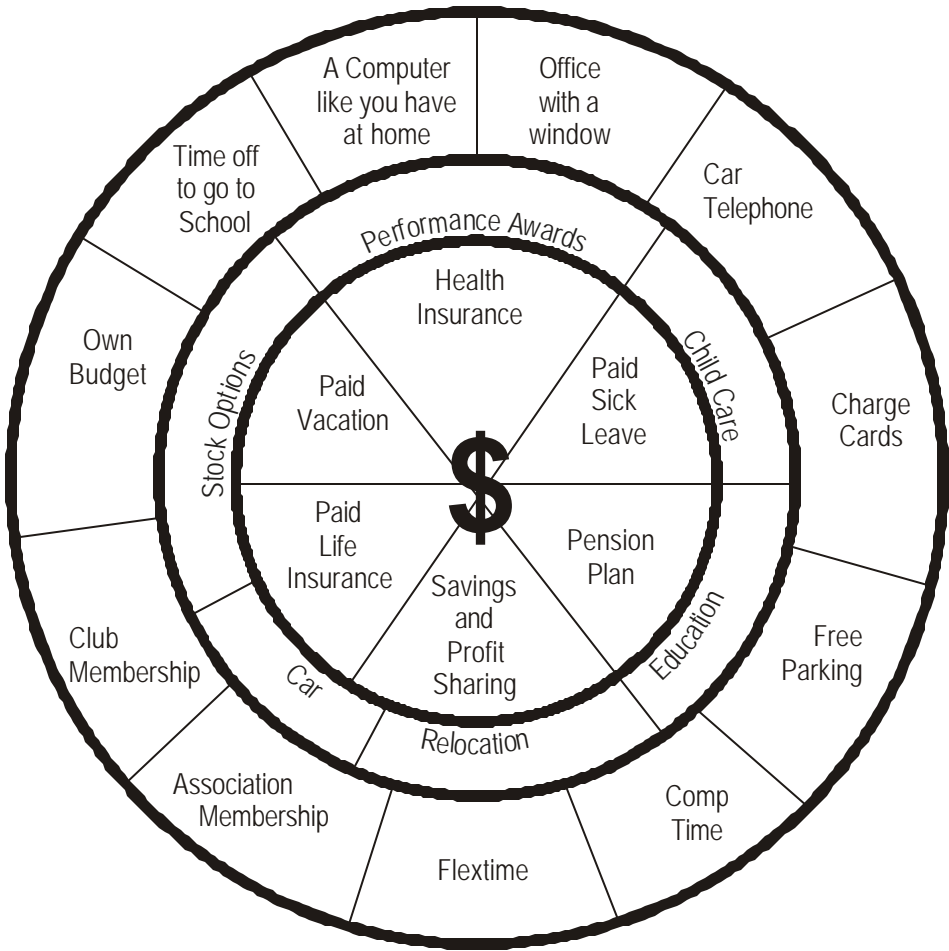
- Write a thank-you note.
- Evaluate the interview. Make notes on questions you forgot to ask; name and title of your interviewer(s); what you did well and what you need to improve upon; new information in file that you've developed for this company.
- Action step—Write down next action step with this company on your calendar or tickler system.

Negotiation Guidelines

- Be positive and polite.
- Express your appreciation for the offer and your interest in the position.
- Mention the issues that concern you and suggest compromises.
- Try to negotiate salary first and then benefits.
- Know your current market value.
- Be willing to accept the low end if you give a salary range.



Benefits Model



Sample Job Acceptance Letter

Amy Ellway
11750 Foothills Dr. #113
Ft. Collins, CO 80526

November 1, 20XX

Mr. Marc Johnson
Operations Manager
Gentract Corporation
PO Box 964
Casper, WY 82602

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for your offer for the position as Secretary. I accept the position with pleasure and look forward to making my contribution to Gentract Corporation.

It is my understanding that the conditions of my employment are as follows:

- My initial annual salary will be \$17,500 per year, paid in equal increments every 2 weeks.
- Benefits include accident, health, and life insurance, effective upon starting work.
- My probationary period lasts 6 months, with an initial performance and salary review after that time.
- Salary reviews are scheduled for every 6 months after completing probation.
- Written performance reviews occur each year on the anniversary of my initial employment.
- The workday is 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Vacation and sick leave accrue at a rate of one day per month and are cumulative.

As we agreed, my starting date will be November 15, 20XX. If there are any pre-employment materials I should read or complete prior to the 15th, please send them to me. I may be reached at (303) 258-3387 any evening for additional information.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Amy Ellway

Sample Job Acceptance Letter

11223 South Shore Road
Reston, VA 22090
(703) 437-3748

April 15, 20XX

Ms. Mary Smith
Personnel Director
DelRay, Inc.
123 Marina St., Suite 200
Laguna Hills, CA 92037

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for your job offer of employment for the Vice-President of Marketing position. It is my understanding that the position reports directly to you and is responsible for speaking engagements, new business, company image, publications, and long range planning.

The employment package includes:

- Annual Base Salary of \$60,000.00.
- A bonus with a minimum range of 20% and a maximum of 50% of compensation.
- Stock options (based on performance).
- Club membership at Golf International.
- Company funded pension plan.
- All relocation costs including purchase and sales costs of housing and mortgage assistance.
- A review at six months.

I look forward to starting with you June 1, 20XX. Thank you again for your offer.

Sincerely,

[Sign your name]

Renee Summer

Course Date _____ **Instructor(s)** _____

We want to provide you with the best possible training. Your reactions to this module will help us improve the training. Please circle one of the following five choices for each question:

SA (Strongly Agree); **A** (Agree); **N** (Neutral/Unsure); **D** (Disagree); or **SD** (Strongly Disagree).

Meeting Course Objectives:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1. Make an effective personal presentation. This will involve reviewing dressing for success, verbal and non-verbal skills. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 2. Interview effectively. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 3. Write a thank-you letter. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 4. Follow up on interviews. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 5. Negotiate the terms of a job offer. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 6. Write a job acceptance letter. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

Contents:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 7. The amount of information covered was appropriate for the length of this module. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| If you answered N, D or SD, was the amount of information covered:
Too much? _____ Too little? _____ | | | | | |
| 8. The learning materials were clear and well organized. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 9. The examples used were appropriate for my situation. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

Instructor(s):

- | | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| 10. The instructor(s) presented information clearly and understandably. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 11. The instructor(s) was/were available and responded to my questions and concerns. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

Course Administration:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 12. The length of the module was appropriate. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| If you answered N, D or SD, was the module:
Too long? _____ Too short? _____ | | | | | |
| 13. The classroom was comfortable. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 14. Breaks were adequate and well spaced. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

Overall:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 15. There was a good balance between exercises and lecture. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 16. I feel that I understand the ideas underlying the content we covered. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| 17. How did you hear about this course? | | | | | |

Comments: (Use back if necessary)

